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House Votes \$70.3 Billion for Defense

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The House of Representatives

lives—fired of being No. 2 in

deciding military policy—
served notice yesterday that it
was going to try harder against
No. 1, Defense Secretary Robert S. McNamara.

Evidence of a more critical
policy on the way the Pentagon
handles its spending came
yesterday as the House passed,
on a vote of 407 to 1, a \$70.3
billion defense appropriations
bill for fiscal 1968. Rep.
George J. Brown (D-Calif.), a
leading Vietnam dove, was the
only dissenter.

The bill passed by the
House not only made a net
cut of \$1.3 billion in the Pentagon's fiscal 1968 budget, but of contract studies and expenditures for what

many members called the "ap-
propriations Committee's most
detailed report on a defense
money bill.

Focus on Management

The report went beyond
perennial arguments on such
policies as bombers vs. mis-
siles, merging of the National
Guard and the antiballistic
missile issue.

The Committee this year
focused on the way the Pen-
tagon manages its money as
well, and it used the kind of
language on cost effectiveness
that the public has come to
associate with McNamara him-
self.

Here are samples from the
Committee report: "The trend
toward ever greater numbers
of contract studies and ex-
penditures for studies must

be curtailed in the interest of
good management and the
wide expenditure of funds...
The Committee whacked \$45
million off the Pentagon's
study money requests.

"The rate of increase in
civilian employment is out of
proportion to the demands by
placed upon the services by
Southeast Asia operations...
The Committee recommended
eliminating 18,150 civilian po-
sitions.

TFX Criticism

"The inability of the De-
partment of Defense to
achieve realistic coordination
in the procurement and sup-
port" of the F-111 (TFX) and
F-4 aircraft "is resulting in
unnecessary cost." The Com-
mittee said the Air Force and
Navy, for example, were pay-

ing different prices for the
same parts for the F-4 both
services use. McNamara has
placed stress in the past on
the savings made by having
two services use the same kind
of aircraft.

The Committee even direct-
ed the Army to dye some
wool on hand rather than go
out and buy new material.

The report represents an
unusually critical look by the
House Appropriations Com-
mittee at Pentagon manage-
ment. The open fights in the
past—such as the one former
Rep. Carl Vinson (D-Ga.) un-
successfully made for the B-70
—have usually been between
the Armed Services Com-
mittees and the Pentagon, not
the Appropriations units.

Also, Chairman George H.
Mahon (D-Tex.) broke his cus-
tom by meeting with the press
several times to stress that
his Committee was cutting fat
from the Pentagon budget and
recommending management
reforms, not cutting money
needed for the Vietnam war.

The bill carried about \$208
billion for the war

The debate on the bill yes-
terday also featured the vow
by several members that the
House was going to have a
bigger say in military policy
from now on. Chairman L.
Mendel Rivers (D-S.C.), for
example, said that he would
"never again" approve funds
for a conventionally powered
warship. He and others said
that the first line ships of
the Navy were going to be
nuclear.

While it would be overstat-
ing the case to say that the
Appropriations Committee at-
titude and the oratory of the
members added up to giving
the House a new hold on the
Pentagon, it does look like
that body is really starting to
tighten its grip.

Before House passage of the
bill, Rep. Richard D. McCar-
thy (D-N.Y.) offered an amend-
ment to strike the \$428,000 in
the bill for the National Board
for the Promotion of Rifle
Practice, but it was rejected
by voice vote.